

The State of Washington



Proclamation

WHEREAS, Washington State is one of the most productive agricultural regions in the country, and Washington farmers and ranchers produce \$9.49 billion in food and agricultural products every year; and

WHEREAS, the quality and diversity of Washington agricultural products is recognized throughout the country, ranking us first in the nation in providing many staple foods; and

WHEREAS, the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs encourages eating these nutritious agricultural products by providing affordable meals and supporting school purchases of local foods for students; and

WHEREAS, Washington State growers produce more than \$26 million worth of food products that are distributed to the National School Lunch Program and other food assistance programs by the United States Department of Agriculture; and

WHEREAS, school nutrition professionals, farmers, and farmworkers are recognized for their heroic efforts to provide hundreds of thousands of meals to keep students and families in Washington State fed during the coronavirus pandemic and recovery; and

WHEREAS, the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs have had an important role in providing food for low-income children and families, students of color, and immigrant households during the coronavirus pandemic and recovery; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Local Farms Healthy Kids Act of 2008 supports increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, meat, legumes, dairy and other products from Washington producers; and

WHEREAS, farm to school programs, such as the one at the Washington State Department of Agriculture, connect Washington farms with schools to increase purchases of Washington-grown foods and improves students' health and learning by supporting nutritious, locally-grown meals, school gardens, and education about Washington foods and farms; and

WHEREAS, farm to school recognizes the diversity of Washington farmers, farmworkers, and their products, and increases opportunities for more farmers to supply fresh, local foods to schools and students; and

WHEREAS, the Washington School Nutrition Association and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Child Nutrition provide invaluable service to our state's schools, helping to ensure healthy, well-balanced meals for our school children;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim October 4, 2023, as

Taste Washington Day

in Washington and I urge all people in our state to join me in this special observance.

Signed this 25th day of September, 2023

Governor Jay Inslee

